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Abstract

This talk begins with an introduction of the compensatory model of work motivation and volition (Kehr, AMR, 2004). The compensatory model synthesizes some previously unrelated lines of research to allow an integrated view on structural and functional aspects of work motivation. The structural components of the model are implicit motives, explicit motives, and perceived abilities. The functional processes are volitional regulation (compensating for inadequate motivation) and problem solving (compensating for inadequate perceived abilities). The compensatory model integrates, challenges, and extends existing conceptions.

I intend to illustrate the practical value of the model by using it as a conceptual framework for self-management training (SMT) and for situational leadership (leadership by motivation; LbM). SMT is a metamotivational and metavolitional intervention concept based on the compensatory model, the existing self-management literature, and several empirical studies with managers. It involves six training modules:

1. goal setting and reducing goal conflicts,
2. increasing awareness of implicit motives,
3. enhancing volitional strength,
4. reducing overcontrol,
5. enhancing organismic congruence and intrinsic motivation, and
6. identifying and overcoming barriers to action.

SMT has been widely used in the field, and two evaluation studies offer preliminary support for the usefulness of the concept. LbM helps to overcome some of the limitations of earlier approaches to situational leadership, notably their somewhat simplistic or overly cognitive conceptions of motivation. In contrast, LbM, being based on the compensatory model, integrates affective, cognitive, volitional, and self-efficacy related approaches to motivation, which in effect permits a more precise and differentiated analysis of the deficiencies of the
leadership situation. Yet, LbM integrates these aspects in a straightforward and transparent manner which makes it a useful tool for practical applications.

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